



National Association of School Nurses

POSITION STATEMENT

Animals in the Classroom

HISTORY:

Animals have been part of the learning experience of students for many years. Animals are effective teaching aids with positive benefits of bonding and caring. Service animals are used to assist some individuals with disabilities.

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUE:

The human/animal bond is therapeutic and well established. The use of service animals is protected by law and may not be regulated by local education agencies. Animals are effective teaching aids and encourage caring skills and responsibility in students. There is, however, potential for adverse affects from animals:

- Allergic reactions
- Scratches and/or bites
- Asthmatic reactions
- Infections
- Infestations

CONCLUSION:

It is the position of the National Association of School Nurses that the practice of keeping animals in the classroom should be carefully monitored. Students with allergies and other special needs must be considered as individual school districts develop and implement policies regarding animals in classrooms. Attention to potential for infection and allergic reaction is a necessary safeguard for the entire school community.

References/Resources:

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology: *Does Your Child's School Trigger Allergies?*
www.aaaai.org/misc/topicofthemonth/0900/checklist September 2000 Topic of the Month.

Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Offices of Epidemiological Services and Public Information *Animals in Kansas Schools: Guidelines for Visiting and Resident Pets*, 10/27/97 Department of Health and Environment
Office of Epidemiologic Services, 900 S.W. Jackson, Suite 1051, Topeka, KS 66612-1290.

School Health Alert: *Animals in Schools: A zoonosis threat?*, SUPPLEMENT, School Health Alert, January 1998

Centers for Disease Control (2000), *Salmonellosis Associated with Chicks and Ducklings – Michigan and Missouri*, Spring 1999, *MMWR*, 49(14): 297-9.

Americans with Disabilities Act, 28 CFR Section 38.302

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, §504 [IDEA]

Adopted: November 2000
Revised: July 2004